



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/566,475

01/31/2006

Roberto Conti

023349-00313

5100

4372 7590 04/16/2009
ARENT FOX LLP
1050 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, N.W.
SUITE 400
WASHINGTON, DC 20036

EXAMINER

DURAND, PAUL R

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3721

NOTIFICATION DATE

DELIVERY MODE

04/16/2009

ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

DCIPDocket@arentfox.com
IPMatters@arentfox.com
Patent_Mail@arentfox.com

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/566,475	Applicant(s) CONTI, ROBERTO	
	Examiner PAUL R. DURAND	Art Unit 3721	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 4/1/2009.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 12-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 12-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 31 January 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 4/1/2009 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 12-18, 20, 21, 23 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Romagnoli (US 4,437,294) in view of Rossi (US 4,747,250).

In claims 12 and 23, Romagnoli discloses the invention as claimed including a device for forming pods comprised of a station 2, for feeding product 3, into at least one forming impression 5, defining a single dose of the product and made in means (generally indicated by drum 1), the impressions being moved by the revolving drum in a circular manner and forming a respective compressed disk 16 (See entire document).

What Romagnoli does not disclose is the use of a tamping device and a reciprocating piston which rotates about a reciprocating axis. However, Rossi teaches that it is old and well known in the art to provide a forming mechanism for forming infusion pods comprised of tamper mechanism 74, moving along a reciprocating axis and a rotating rod 76, which rotates around a reciprocating axis of the tamper device for the purpose of compacting and shaping a quantity of product to be packaged (see figures 1, 2 and col. 4, line 27-51).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have provided the invention of Romagnoli with the tamping device and rotational means as taught by Rossi for the purpose of compacting and shaping a quantity of product to be packaged.

In claim 13, Romagnoli discloses the invention as claimed including the forming impression 5, is moved by the means 1, along a circular path "f" (See figures 1 and 3).

In claim 14, Romagnoli discloses the invention as claimed including supporting station 12 for supporting and feeding filter material 9 (See figure 1).

In claim 15, Romagnoli discloses the invention as claimed including the product feed station comprised of an arc shaped fixed hopper 2, facing a revolving drum 1 (See figures 1 and 3).

In claim 16, Romagnoli discloses the invention as claimed including revolving drum 1, equipped with a plurality of pistons 7, arranged radially on the surface of the drum (8) and having a hollow head (generally shown by the bevel portion in figure 3) forming an impression and designed to receive a dose of the product fed by

Art Unit: 3721

the feed station, radial drive means (not shown), imparting synchronized movements to the pistons (See entire document).

In claim 17, Romagnoli discloses the invention as claimed including cam means including profile 22, engaged by follower 21 attached to each piston assembly, connecting rod 20, attached to the cylinder 7 (See figures 1-3).

In claim 18, Romagnoli discloses the invention as claimed including the cam means causing each single piston to be positioned according to movements referenced to a relative position or angular section of the circular path "P" and corresponding to a first arc-shaped path section where the piston 7 is radially retracted towards the drum 1 in such a way that the piston moves into a product dosing configuration when it reaches a point corresponding to its bottom dead centre, a second arc-shaped path section for dosing where the piston is initially at the bottom dead centre, in such a manner as to collect as much product as possible in the head, and moves in a radial direction towards the outside of the drum until it reaches the endpoint of the feed station, where there is a wall leveling off the product accommodated in the impression, a third arc-shaped path section for tamping the disc where the piston moves radially towards the outside of the drum and against a stop wall corresponding to its top dead centre where it remains until it starts and a fourth arc-shaped path section where the piston moves back up in order to facilitate detachment of the disc (See entire document).

In claim 20, Romagnoli discloses the invention as claimed including a plurality of pistons mounted on a revolving drum. What Romagnoli does not disclose is the use of a gear arrangement to provide movement to the rotating rod. However, Rossi teaches

Art Unit: 3721

that it is old and well known in the art to provide a rotational rod 76, with rotational drive means comprised of fixed gear 100, meshed with corresponding gear wheels 98 for the purpose of imparting rotational movement to the rotational rod (see figure 3 and col. 6, lines 8-17).

In claim 21, Romagnoli discloses the invention as claimed including arc-shaped walls 8 and 13, around the outer surface of the drum 1 (See figures 1 and 3).

In claim 24, Romagnoli discloses the invention as claimed including a device for forming pods comprised of a station 2, for feeding product 3, into at least one forming impression 5, defining a single dose of the product and made in means (generally indicated by drum 1), for forming a respective compressed disk 16 (See entire document).

What Romagnoli does not disclose is the use of a tamping device and a reciprocating piston which rotates about a reciprocating axis. However, Rossi teaches that it is old and well known in the art to provide a forming mechanism for forming infusion pods comprised of tamper mechanism 74, moving along a reciprocating axis and a rotating rod 76, which rotates around a reciprocating axis of the tamper device, through the use of a ring shaped gear 100 and meshed with gear 106, which drive the rotating rod for the purpose of compacting and shaping a quantity of product to be packaged (see figures 1, 2 and col. 4, line 27-51).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have provided the invention of Romagnoli with the

Art Unit: 3721

tamping device and rotational means as taught by Rossi for the purpose of compacting and shaping a quantity of product to be packaged.

4. Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Romagnoli in view of Mattos (US 2,684,186).

As the examiner understands the claim, Romagnoli discloses the invention as claimed including cam 23. What Romagnoli does not disclose is the cam comprised of different arc shaped section and an adjustable upper section.

However, Mattos teaches that it is old and well known in the art to provide a metering drum with a cam 38, having first and second arcuate portion 46 and 48, where the upper first portion 48 adjusts the piston 37 during operation. Additionally, the piston 37 is adjustable through bushing 54 (see figures 1-3, 11 and col. 6, line 38 – col. 7, line 3).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the invention of Romagnoli with the adjusting means as taught by Mattos for the purpose of varying the volume of product captured and dispensed.

5. Claim 22 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Romagnoli in view of Lofman et al. (US 6,135,120).

Romagnoli discloses the invention as claimed except for the use of a vacuum operated belt conveyor. However, Lofman teaches that it is old and well known in the art to provide a belt conveyor 23 powered by suction means not shown for the purpose of holding an item in as stable condition (see figure 1 and col. 4, lines 28-64).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the invention of Romagnoli with the conveying means as taught by Lofman for the purpose of holding an item in as stable condition.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed 4/1/2009 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that the claims as amended are distinguished over the cited prior art of Romagnoli and Rossi. This argument is not persuasive.

Although claims of issued patents are interpreted in light of the specification, prosecution history, prior art and other claims, this is not the mode of claim interpretation to be applied during examination. During examination, the claims must be interpreted as broadly as their terms reasonably allow. *In re American Academy of Science Tech Center*, 367 F.3d 1359, 1369, 70 USPQ2d 1827, 1834 (Fed. Cir. 2004). *See also* MPEP § 2111.01.

In this instance the limitation of the impression of Romagnoli is moved along a circular path as the drum is moved. Moreover, while the teaching of Rossi is utilized to show the rotation of the rod, during the formation of the pods, Romagnoli is used to show applicant that the revolving drum unit is well known. Nonobviousness cannot be shown by attacking references individually where the rejections are based on combinations of references. *See In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981); *In re Merck & Co.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 USPQ 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986).

Therefore, the rejection is proper and this action is non-final.

Conclusion

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to PAUL R. DURAND whose telephone number is (571)272-4459. The examiner can normally be reached on IFP.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rinaldi I. Rada can be reached on 571-272-4467. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/PAUL R. DURAND/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3721
April 14, 2009